# UNITY

*FREEDOM, FELLOWSHIP AND CHARACTER IN RELIGION*


Our Religion of Tomorrow - *J. Ray Shute*

For a Factual Funeral Discourse - - - - - - - - - *Herbert Martin*

Defrosting the Cold War - *Jacob J. Weinstein*

The Majesty of the Law - *E. P. Herman*

Has the Bible a Place in Education? - - - - - - - - - *Robert T. Weston*

Ethical Religion—What Is It? - *Leo Hirsch*

What Is a Miracle? - - *May Stranathan*

Western Conference News



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CURTIS W. REESE, *Editor*


## Contributors

*Ira D. Cardiff:* Former member of the science faculties of Columbia University, the University of Utah, the University of Kansas, and Washington State College. Author of *A Million Years of Human Progress, What Great Men Think of Religion, et al.*

*C. A. Hawley:* Head of the Department of English Literature, Ottawa University, Ottawa, Kansas.

*E. P. Herman:* Free lance writer.

*Randall S. Hilton:* Executive Secretary of the Western Unitarian Conference, Chicago, Illinois.

*Leo Hirsch:* Free lance writer and lecturer.

*Herbert Martin:* Professor of Philosophy, State University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa.

*J. Ray Shute:* Mayor of Monroe, North Carolina.

*May Stranathan:* Reporter and journalist.

*Jacob J. Weinstein:* Rabbi of K. A. M. Temple, Chicago, Illinois.

*Robert T. Weston:* Minister of First Unitarian Church, Louisville, Kentucky

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## The Field

*"The world is my country, to do good is my Religion."*

### Invitation to Fairness

DEVERE ALLEN

If you criticize a country you expect lively comebacks, but when you defend your own from unfair charges, you anticipate nothing more than silence. Hence it was surprising, when this writer some weeks ago asked foreign critics for fair play and deeper understanding, to find that few columns had evoked a wider interest abroad. That article did not deny the wrongs committed by the United States, both past and present, but begged critics to be sure of their facts and to express their criticisms with convincing balance.

In San Juan, the energetic Director of Information at the University of Puerto Rico and *Worldover Press* correspondent, José M. Toro-Nazario, took that column, translated it into Spanish, had it mimeographed, and sent it to a considerable number of intelligent people representing different backgrounds. Many sent frank comments. They are worth reproducing here because they show how Uncle Sam, the Big Neighbor to the North, is regarded in a possession which historically has no little right to be resentful.

First woman mayor of San Juan, Señora Felisa Rincón de Gautier, pointed to a recent inter-American conference at San Juan as an illustration of the way in which old ideas persist about the United States. "A majority of the delegates from twenty Spanish-American countries," she recalls, "bluntly admitted they had been victims of extremist bias. The delegates expected to find Puerto Rico a factory where Yankee imperialism was in full swing; they expected to come in contact with dispossessed natives who had not the least knowledge of their Spanish background. Instead, they were welcomed by a clear-cut Spanish-American community actually enjoying more civil rights than those held by many of their fellow-citizens back home."

That ageless liberal who is Visiting Professor at the University, Dr. Robert Morss Lovett, singled out journalism as the reason for lack

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# UNITY

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## EDITORIAL

At the recent Annual Meeting of the Unitarian Ministers' Association held in Boston a Resolution was adopted to the effect that a member of the Association may not perform ministerial offices in the parish of another member of the Association without the invitation or consent of the parish minister. When found guilty of failure to conform to the regulation established by the Resolution, the offending brother shall have his name published in the *Ministers Newsletter,* or if the offense is serious enough shall be dropped from membership. The Resolution obviously covers preaching, performing funeral, marriage, and christening rites, and perhaps speaking before auxiliary parish groups. The Resolution was supported by ministers of unquestioned standing and integrity. It is, therefore, to be taken seriously. Nevertheless, there are valid objections to this action, which I believe should be registered.

*First,* such a radical innovation in the practice of a free ministry should not be proposed, discussed, and adopted in a thirty-minute period without previous deliberation. Such unseemly speed throws doubt on the responsible nature of the action.

*Second,* the laity, who are the people most intimately concerned, were not advised that such action was contemplated. To me it seems unlikely that the free and independent members of free churches would concede the spiritual proprietary rights assumed by the Resolution.

*Third,* the action violates the privacy of the family in the intimate situations having to do with marriages, births, and deaths. These are relationships between the family and the minister of their choice, and not something to be siphoned through institutional channels. A death occurs in a family. The services of a minister of long and intimate friendship with the family is desired. He is called by telephone. Unless unavailable because of previous commitments he should and would immediately respond affirmatively. Under the action of the Association he must postpone his reply until he can telephone or call on the parish minister and receive his consent. Even an hour's delay, or longer if the parish minister is not easily reached, would be difficult to explain without giving the real reason. And the real reason should be given, and when given may well carry with it dissensions not already existing. It is conceded that the parish minister will, as a matter of course, give his consent. This being true, what good is served by such spiritual boondoggling.

*Fourth,* such problems in this connection as do in fact exist, and there are many, should be dealt with on the basis of friendly understanding and not by legislation. I gathered from such discussion as there was that the chief difficulties have arisen in cases where there is a pastor emeritus. Waiving the parish status of the position of pastor emeritus, obviously this is the kind of situation that can be amicably worked out only by the men involved or by the parish. A minister who is sensitive to the delicate nature of the pastoral relationship will make an asset of not resenting and not interfering with the loyalty of parishioners to a pastor emeritus or for that matter to a former minister. Consultation, cooperation, and understanding are the proper techniques for solving such problems, not trials and expulsions.

There are other implications of the Resolution that deserve comment. How would an Alliance branch, a Laymen's League chapter, or a Young People's group react to the requirement that a member of the Ministers' Association when invited to speak to them must before accepting secure the consent of the parish minister? Perhaps I am wrong, and the members and auxiliary groups of our free churches have lost their traditional independence and are ready to submit to clerical domination of their spiritual lives, and perhaps the ministers have gone ecclesiastical and are ready to accept hierarchical authority, but I do not think so. In my opinion the Unitarian Ministers' Association should rescind its action. The columns of UNITY are open to expressions of opinion on both sides of this important issue.

CURTIS W. REESE.

# Our Religion of Tomorrow

J. RAY SHUTE

Is it conceivable that our civilization, which has produced control of atomic energy, is capable of creating a new religion in keeping with the scientific requirements of our age? If not, we are facing a new phase in the progress of mankind which may function without benefit of religion, and if this occurs it will be a direct indictment of Western civilization.

There has been little improvement in our religious thought for thousands of years, certainly none since the advent of the Christian era. Christianity developed few innovations from the age-old concepts of religion; at best it was a grand imitator. In our present thinking we use the same procedural techniques that the cave man and other primitive peoples used in approaching the unknown. Fear still is master, and its appeasement is the concern of every age, and this is still man's religion—whether the liturgical procedure takes place in the cave or in the cathedral. No more anomalous situation could possibly be conceived than the atomic age, with our primitive religion.

Why do we presuppose that religion must follow traditional lines; that it is dependent upon Hebrew, Christian, or even Western culture for its foundation or background? Why, indeed, do we suppose that man's concept is valid and that the generally accepted God-idea is even partially correct? By the very arguments we use to deny Christocentric or Bibliocentric religion, we find our present-day liberal concepts in very serious danger of being as logically disputed and denied. And Humanism, as opposed to Theism, is little more than a negation in itself. The one says, "Man is the important thing in life," the other says, "God is life." I fail to see any constructive difference until we reinterpret man, God and life—and the relationship, if any, between them. It is this thing that seems important just now and it appears that little time is being expended in a scientific reëxamination along new lines.

Perhaps the scientist can convince us that there is no place in our new age for religion, but certainly the philosopher, the poet, the common man will accept such a declaration with reservations, if not complete denial. Is religion really juvenile, as some would have us believe? Has man outgrown this primitive escape mechanism? Have we wasted on religion even more in manpower, brainpower, and wealth than we have on war—and to this end? Surely, modern religionists would agree that most of our efforts to date have produced little which has meaning and significance for our civilization. We seem to have accomplished little more than to have been parties to a mass moral and mental enslavement, far more horrible and damnable in its implications than anything ever visited upon mankind. Has the hoax been so drastically perpetrated that there is no chance for recovery, for realignment, for rebuilding? Or have we a plan which will bear scientific scrutiny; that will square with truth as we know it; that will supply the ingredient that appears to be now lacking?

Modern man has neither temperament nor time to chase will-o'-the-wisps, to build houses of cards, or shrines to non-existent powers in a supernatural overworld. He will certainly not reënslave himself, once he has known the freedom from fear, superstition, and the mythological. Can we establish the need, and demonstrate that need, for a religion which will have anything to offer modern man in terms of life? That, then, is the problem which today confronts our religious institutions throughout the world and this constitutes the greatest single challenge to our culture in its long and eventful history. What is done in the years which lie ahead, therefore, becomes most important.

It becomes evident that before we discuss religion and its place in our modern world we must first discuss the need, if any, for religion, *per se*. We of the modern school are more or less agreed that there is no need for traditional religion in our present age. Perhaps we can go even further and say that orthodoxy is undesirable in our time and if we confine our discussions to a purely scientific level, man would surely be happier and psychologically safer, as well as economically wealthier, if he knew absolutely nothing about traditional and fundamental religion. The negativism of this type of religion makes for ignorance, intolerance, bigotry, superstition, fear, and restraint. It is the antithesis of democracy, freedom and progress. It has nothing to offer civilization but a drag on processes of evolution and forces for the enlightenment of mankind. In making this statement, we are not unaware of the contribution that religion has made in certain areas throughout the years; however, that contribution is, itself, a negative asset and not the result of positive action by or on the part of religion.

The curse of the supernatural has contributed more to the failure of man to fully enjoy life than any other single drag on our civilization and this myth should once and for all be relegated to the trash heap for keeps. When man learns that he needs no excuse for living; that life itself is meaningful, then he will have taken a long step forward. To think of the waste of human life in all of the centuries past is distressing, to say the least. Man can no longer try to live in two worlds at one and the same time, he will have his hands full living a rich and happy life in the natural world in the future, because ours will be an active, exciting, and thrilling world.

The fear of the hellfire and brimstone of antiquated theologies is hardly as impressive to modern man as his first-hand knowledge of the utter hell of atomic bombings. So, the fear of being damned by a destructive and angry God will find no place in our new life. This, too, is indicative of the negativism of orthodoxy. Man in these times is not regimented on a basis of fear, but, rather, he is impelled by the positive urge. So, we will have no place in the atomic age for a religion of fear. And such monstrous lies as Augustine gave authority to in the fifth century, which insist that children are conceived in iniquity and born in sin and are dependent on the church for salvation, will be outlawed forever by free men.

We could go down the list of undesirable aspects of traditional religion which could not possibly have a place in modern man's life. However, where does liberal religion come into this picture; where is its place in the religious jig-saw puzzle? In the first place, unlike orthodoxy, liberalism has no creed, no polity, no

dogma. Liberal religion is fundamentally characterized by its techniques and procedural methods, rather than by its presentation of religious "facts." Thus it is that liberalism appeals to the non-conformists and to the scientific. For there alone can man feel morally free to pursue his studies, his investigations, his tests. So, actually, liberal churches do not present religion in a measured dose, but they are laboratories for scientific study. Therefore, they do not fall into the same category as orthodox churches, whose function is to save men by offering them a revealed religion. Ironically, all revealed religion is agnostic, in that it denies the availability of truth except by divine consent. Orthodoxy, unquestionably, would not openly admit that truth is unknowable on the human level, yet that is exactly what it teaches. Man cannot know the truth that makes men free unless God reveals it to him; thus, we have agnosticism.

What do we want, then, in a new religion? Certainly, we do not want a revealed religion; nor an exclusive religion; nor a traditional religion; nor a negative religion; nor a supernatural religion. We must have a religion that affirms life; that offers to *all* men, of every race, language, and nationality, the same message and participation. We must have a religion that practices, as well as preaches, world peace and brotherhood; also our new religion must be scientific and democratic and progressive. It must also have warmth and meaning, and it can be "brand-new," if it is vibrant and alive. It will be intensely human, yes, but not necessarily humanistic. It will center around *a* God-idea, yes, but it does not have to be theistic in the commonly accepted sense of the term. It will have moral value and spiritual qualities, yes, but will not be a religion of the supernatural. It will have group appeal and the worship motif, yes, but it will not be authoritarian or communistic or involved in vicarious experience. It must be a religion that will accept truth whenever and wherever it is found and will close the door to no experiment or thesis. It will just as quickly accept proven findings in the field of psychical research as it will in the fields of sociology or biology. And when new facts are found, new discoveries made and new techniques developed, our new religion will not only accept them, but will become a point of dissemination therefor. Our members of this new religion will, in very truth, be disciples to advancing knowledge; they will hold truth above belief, and action *now* will be the motivating force constantly. Yes, our religion of tomorrow will be most interesting and meaningful.

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# For a Factual Funeral Discourse

HERBERT MARTIN

We live in a new world brought about by the impact of science and its technologies. From these changes ideas, social concepts, and values are not immune. Facts today have right-of-way over uncritically accepted traditional assumptions and theories. To this outlook funeral discourse should not be indifferent. I have often wondered as to the mental "set" and appreciation of funeral directors after long exposure to customary usage. Ordinary men are interested in the here and now. Too many discourses deal in futures based on ancient scripture texts. It surely is not too much to suggest that a content more factual and current in character might well be introduced with much gain, with no loss. I would offer one or more changes of content in keeping with the cultural levels of our age.

The first fact that should gain in emphasis is the occasion, the fact of death. There is need for a clearer understanding of this fact. Death can no longer be interpreted by intelligence as an inherited Adamic penalty, not even an experience to be dreaded. Biologists tell us that life and death are concomitant, coeval, that we begin to die when we begin to live, that life and death are natural processes, and that we are nature's children. Such interpretation whenever presented and understood would help banish fear of this traditionally dreaded experience. The fact of death would then be entertained as a phase of a well-ordered life.

Again, death may well be a friendly fact in nature's process. What if there were no death, a picture and condition unimaginable and intolerable! What a cluttered world! Death in youth is regrettable due in the large to our upbringing. On the other hand all is not lost. We should not forget the social and personal gifts and joys of such abbreviated life. Grateful should we be for that unique springtime. Metabolism varies with health and years. In mature life and age the will to live undergoes modification, the tides of life are less insurgent, they do not run so high. With the twilight hour, sleep is welcomed. Death to such at least is a friendly natural event.

Recently I attended the service over an esteemed friend. The substance of discourse was centered about and climaxed by the assertion of certainty that the deceased was happier at that moment in heaven than ever here on earth. That assurance struck me as not wholly courteous to the lonely widow. Such pontifical utterance is wholly emotional and without factual basis. A severer critic might well call such guaranty fraudulent.

Immortality, properly defined, may have a factual basis. What of the life of the deceased? Was the life of the community deepened, enriched through him? Did the nobility of his character inspire those who knew him? Were his major qualities seen, appreciated, and woven into the social fabric? If so, he lived after his earthly career was ended. Such immortality is factual. Life may, like a speech, be immortal without being eternal. The social values created or nurtured by such a one become germinal for future seeding and social harvest. And, too, in so far as he may be aware while living of his helpful contribution, he himself experiences his own immortality. In Roycean phrase he experiences eternal life (immortality) in the midst of time.

The social, moral, and intellectual value of such factual funeral discourse is obvious.

# Prayer

IRA D. CARDIFF

The genus Homo is burdened with a number of troublesome atavistic possessions. These frequently interfere with the normal development of individuals and at times with the general evolution of the genus itself. This general statement applies not only to Homo, but to other genera—probably to all genera. Few if any animals or plants have evolved to their present condition without retaining some one or more ancestral characters which are no longer of any use and frequently are a handicap.

Atavism is defined by Webster's International as "the recurrence, in a descendant, of characters of a remote ancestor." The term has more often been used with reference to morphological, or bodily, characters. However, in the life of man there are numerous cases of atavism which deface and disturb his psychology and social activities. His superstitions and prejudices frequently lead him astray and provoke anti-social and ridiculous performances—for, seemingly, there is nothing mankind cherishes more than his prejudices and superstitions. That certain prejudices and many of his superstitions are atavistic there can be little doubt. Probably one of the commonest of these is prayer, a vestige of man's early days when he really believed there existed a personal god who could be propitiated and cajoled into answering prayers. Apparently in the earlier days, at least among the Hebrews, the favorite technique was to feed the god (the priest, of course, being on hand to supervise and look after the offerings for the god or gods). Early man was probably perpetually hungry—at least in the desert country inhabited by the "chosen people." Thus burnt offerings of flesh were the favorite methods of propitiation. Later, as food became more easily obtained in Italy and Western Europe, the technique changed to a play upon the vanity of the deity—or glorification. This had considerable advantage over the sacrifice of flesh—meat was scarce, whereas glorification was easy. To be sure, the priest was still in evidence, suave and clever. I recall several years ago visiting the oldest mission church in America (there are several hundred of these scattered about the country) near Albuquerque, New Mexico, and, noting quantities of onions, garlic, peppers, squash, corn, etc., about the church entrance, I inquired of the nun who was showing me the place as to the significance of all this produce, to which inquiry she naively replied, "When the Indians come to confession, if they don't have their dollar, they bring onions or peppers." "How often do they come to confession?" "Once a week." "To what do these Indians confess?" This, apparently, was a sixty-four dollar question to her.

But to return to the matter of prayer; there are still millions of Indians—many with white skins and blue eyes—who feel they must satisfy the vanity of their deity by keeping up a constant glorification program, accompanied also by something much more substantial. However, the Jewish Encyclopedia states that prayer is a substitute for sacrifice in the evolution of rites.

But there are other cults than Christians and Jews whose followers pray. Prayer may take a number of forms. The Muslim falls upon the earth, face pressed into the ground; the Catholic gets upon his knees and closes the eyes (possibly counts his beads); the Methodist bows his head while his cleric calls loudly to God, giving him advice or orders; the Rotarian or Congressman stands and, looking about, plays the hypocrite while some functionary delivers an apologetic of an inane and colorless nature. Of the above there are various modifications from the moronic "God have mercy on my soul," repeated thirty, forty, or fifty times as though God has the intelligence of a parrot and only by incessant repetition will sufficient impression be made upon him to secure a response. Then there is the printed prayer which can be purchased by the thousand and a copy dropped into a convenient receptacle, there is the wheel that may be given a turn, and there is the prayer by a sign of the cross made with the hand. However, whatever their nature, whether by the most devout Muslim, abjectly prone upon the earth, or the hypocritical Rotarian, who prays but once a week only in public (and by proxy), whoever so indulges, bemeans himself before an assumed superior power or personality. The suppliant acknowledges himself inferior, a weakling, a subject, a slave, a pawn of a god, to be pushed about regardless of his own plans or wishes, and subject to the whims of a deity.

Now, I maintain that anyone who will thus bemean himself is just that much less a man. The person who can stand upon his own—not only his feet, but his intellect—is the one who is the valued member of society, i.e., the type of society we pretend to prize.

The Roman Catholics are probably one of the most dogmatic of the cults in regard to this habit of psychological archaics. The Catholic Encyclopedia defines prayer, "to plead, to beg, to ask earnestly," then enters upon a long disquisition upon the theology of prayer, but in its summary states that "petition is the principal act of prayer," and adds, "above all we are to pray that God may be glorified." Thus prayer is more in the interest of satisfying God's vanity than for the benefit of the suppliant.

In fact, the Catholic Encyclopedia also states that, "in hearing our prayer, God does not change his will or action in one regard, but simply puts into effect what he had eternally decreed." This being true, one can scarcely see the need of prayer, for according to the Catholic theology, everything has been foreordained, and no amount of supplication can change it; in other words, the prayers are only for the glorification of the deity—a play upon his colossal vanity.

The assertion frequently made that one's prayers have been answered is on a par with the boast of one who claims ability to foretell the weather or pick the winner in a horse race. The successful guess is loudly proclaimed; the failures are not mentioned, whereas the only real test of success in such a matter is a mathematical check of success against failures. A mother prays for the safety of her child and occasionally the child is saved, but think of the many, many millions of such prayers which have not been answered, and, if the Christian theology is correct, cannot be answered because God, in his wisdom, has previously ordained that millions of little children must suffer most excruciating tortures unto death and their parents still suffer for a longer time over the loss.

Of all the heritages of our primitive ancestors, prayers are undoubtedly the most absurd. They are considered "sacred," therefore above criticism, and are tolerated, with untold harm to mankind.

# Defrosting the Cold War

JACOB J. WEINSTEIN

Everywhere men and women are in the grip of fear, uncertainty, and cynicism. More and more one hears the counsel of despair: "Let's unload a few of our atom bombs on strategic Soviet centers and have it over with."

In venturing opinions on this difficult and complicated subject, one must tread lightly and humbly, for all the facts are not available to the average citizen. The "iron curtain" is not a Russian monopoly. We have a two-fold censorship here. One is called military security, or the interests of national defense; the other is the vested interests and economic bias of the owners of the instruments of public information in America. A press that will splatter half its pages with the Mindszenty trial and give only surreptitious notice to the American delegates' maneuvers to accept Franco Spain into the family of the United Nations is exercising a bias which produces many of the same by-products as does deliberate governmental censorship.

Then there is another more general obstacle to the discovery of the truth. It is the barrage of propaganda—the smoke screen laid down by these same agencies, which is deeply suffused with crimson and deeply dappled with innumerable red herrings that shed their slippery, smelly scales over every concrete issue, until we are all shouting shibboleths at one another instead of reasoning together. The question is no longer: Do you think the European Recovery Program can succeed?, or, Do you think a strong, unified Germany will hasten a third World War? But you are jockeyed into a position where you must answer, "Are you a Communist?", "Did you vote for Wallace?", "Do you believe in labor unions?". You are even subjected to a retroactive curse for having fought Franco in 1937, or opposed the sending of steel and oil to Japan in 1938, or boycotted the Nazis early in 1937. You are made guilty by association. If you fought the Nazis, the Japs, and the Fascists in company with people who then were or later became Communists or fellow travellers, you are obviously a subversive person and not fit to have an opinion on national issues.

I sincerely trust that the Church and the Synagogue will keep severely aloof from this vicious hysteria. If the Church cannot claim any special insight into these complicated matters, I hope that its inherent pacifism, its instinctive abhorrence of war, will prompt it to remain above the battle of shibboleths, and calmly to insist that the people be given the truth and every opportunity to deliberate and judge before they are driven into the suicidal trap of war. Some institutions may conceivably survive the next war, but not the Church—surely not the Church universal. Some little nationalistic fragments of the Church, some few anchorite hideouts of scared mystics may survive, but not the glory and the dream, not the vision and the splendor that would build a new heaven and a new earth.

Let us therefore confront a few realistic facts in the present struggle.

This is not a war between good and evil, between pure democracy and impure Communism. One side of the lineup contains democratic governments of different complexions and with different flaws: America, for instance, with Jim Crow and growing industrial monopolies placing more and more strictures on free and private business enterprise, and a growing military bureaucracy placing still more limitations on that free enterprise; Britain with a labor government, nationalizing large segments of private enterprise in its domestic economy and still holding to its imperialistic foreign and colonial trade; France, highly individualistic in its rural economy, more and more socialistic in its urban economy; Scandinavian countries, where trade unions, cooperatives and government controlled utilities have left little of free and rugged capitalism; Italy, semi-Socialist, semi-Communist, and semi-Fascist; the Vatican, ideologically bent on an all-out war on atheistic Communism, holding unwillingly to social-democratic nations, embracing social-democracy because it fears Communism, but convinced nevertheless that more authoritarian governments are better for its imperialist ambitions.

On the other side of this squirmy line of ideological and political battle is Soviet Russia: a political dictatorship which has imposed a five-year state-planism upon millions of Russians, who are willing to accept economic equalitarianism without political liberty because they never had liberty under the Czar and they never had land; willing also to accept continued hardship because of national fervor bred by fear of aggression from capitalist countries, and because of ignorance of other forms of political and economic life; satellite countries Poland, Jugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, Roumania, where state-planism is more gradual, where there is slower confiscation and slower collectivization of land, where the Church is much better tolerated, and where national loyalties are more sympathetically received, as witness Tito and the Polish government's friendly relations with the Church. We in America, who have witnessed the antics of the most stupid branch of world Communism, find it hard to believe that deviations have taken place in the satellite countries, that these countries are not repeating some of the colossal blunders of Russian Communism, such as forced and brutal collectivization before machinery was available to rationalize agriculture, such as the unmitigated warfare on the Orthodox Church.

As we look more closely at the factors involved, we must face the fact that the forms of collective enterprise and state capitalism or state-planism, which is very loosely called Communism, are here to stay, and that for all their faults, these systems have proven their stability and have won the loyalty of large parts of the population of these lands. The fact that the shabby standards of economic welfare achieved by them are not attractive to us, and the fact that we could not enjoy even this sparse bread without the salt of political freedom, does not invalidate the achievements of Communism for the great masses of ignorant peasants and industrial serfs who make up the majority of the populations of these countries.

A very great deal depends on whether we accept the proposition that these two aggregations of systems—one preferring political liberty to economic equalitarianism, and very jealous of its religious liberty; the other preferring, on the whole, economic equalitarianism to political liberty and opportunistically tolerant of religion—can live together on the same planet.

If we accept the proposition that they cannot, then the United Nations and the Atlantic Pact are but tools of strategy. They are but maneuvering grounds where

we can dig in for the more advantageous position to strike. Then the defensive nature of the North Atlantic Pact will become by gradual stages offensive, the Economic Recovery Program will become more and more a military rearmament program, and the United Nations will be a sloughed off carapace left to dissolve under the blistering heat of war.

If, however, we believe that there is room for these two systems to live in a fair degree of peace and international exchange, we can stave off the war to end all peace, and gain very precious time. In such an atmosphere, the Atlantic Pact can serve as a persuasive agency in bringing the Russians to a more judicious use of the veto, and in opening their territory to international inspection, and to the cleansing breeze of free reporting. Then we can bring about a situation where two systems of political economy can engage in a spirited but peaceful competition for the loyalties of men.

I am convinced that the people in the Russian sphere of influence do not enjoy the one-party system, nor relish political dictatorship, nor the Siberian exile for political dissenters. I do not believe that they would long tolerate the stupendous overhead and the colossal inefficiencies which we know exist under the soviet type of state-planism. If they were freely exposed to the examples of other types of economic enterprise and political organization, they would agitate for such reforms, and we would see more Titos, we would see more developments such as are taking place in China, developments which respect the tradition, the culture, and the special sanctities of the land.

I am equally convinced that the people of our Western lands—the countries that have lived under the democratic traditions—will not tolerate the vicious cycles of boom and bust, nor the immoral acquisition of vital public utilities in a few powerful and often ruthless hands, nor the wasting of our rich natural resources in the old game of the devil take the hindmost, nor the plowing of so huge a part of our usufruct in the arsenals of war. I believe there are many sensible citizens among us who want to know why the Western countries of Europe with rich American subsidies are still insolvent and woefully weak, while the satellite countries, especially Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Jugoslavia, are making such rapid strides to recovery.

This is the time when we need statesmen who will have the cunning of serpents and the gentleness of doves. We are reminded of James Byrnes' grave warning: "If by 1951 we have not secured treaties of peace, or made progress towards such treaties, we will have moved from a cold war to a hot war."

Signs multiply that there is a greater willingness to negotiate. There may have been a time when toughness was needed. Perhaps it was that toughness, the fact of our economic stability, the amazing performance of our airlift which has brought the Russians around. But there is a time to be hard and a time to be soft. We need less of the Acheson insistence on unbending principle and more of the Byrnes' insistence "we must get treaties of peace—even imperfect ones." Above all, we must curb the appetites of our military, who seem to be aching for a chance to use our new weapons. And we must be extremely vigilant of those black spiders led by Julius Krug, who have been exposed by that Curmudgeon Ickes, as men who would give the arsenal of the Ruhr back to a Germany still unrepentant, still Nazified, because they think that such a Germany will stop Russia, forgetting that a new Hitler might make a pact with Stalin or Stalin's successor that will really stick. The greed of certain of our industrialists, served by Mr. Krug and the Collisson Commission, is such that they would encourage another Nazi invasion of Europe if they could get a few patents by so doing.

If the American people and our representatives in Congress can shake the tyranny of special interests, of the military and the servile press, we can manage it so that the cold war will become a competition between two systems in providing a more abundant life for our respective peoples. If we have faith in our democratic way of life, we need not fear the result of such a rivalry.

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# The Majesty of the Law

E. P. HERMAN

One of the most impressive laws in biophysics is that which proclaims that if constant irritation is applied to a group of harmless and properly functioning cells dire results are very likely to follow. A mole on the cheek will remain simply a mole on the cheek if it is left alone. But if it is subjected to constant rubbing and irritation it will become something more than a mole on the cheek. It will become a skin cancer with all the fearful potentialities of skin cancers to maim and destroy.

Not only do constant irritation and trifling annoyances lead to disaster in the human body, but very frequently the same thing takes place in the social body. It is not alone disease and surroundings that make little criminals out of good people, and big criminals out of little criminals. The constant trifling annoyances of maladministration of the law accomplish the same thing.

It is very seldom one colossal error of the law which brings on the evil results. It is the constant irritating effects on the average man and woman of laws concerning trifles that finally bring about disregard for the law. Contempt for the law is brought about by the law making itself ridiculous. And it is contempt for the law which induces the average man or woman to break it.

In modern society the law is constantly making so many ill-considered moves that one cannot blame the average man or woman for loathing it. With the ushering in of the motor age almost everyone has been arrested for one traffic violation or another. It is not the traffic violation in itself which is responsible for making a scofflaw out of the average citizen; it is the interminable waiting to pay the fine, the wholesale dispensing of justice, the cattle-like crowding of traffic courts.

The newspapers mirror faithfully the workings of the law. It marches majestically across their pages. We learn that it is not the dyed-in-the-wool criminal who is the object of cop-wrath and correction by the magistrate and other minor judges. Most frequently it

is the law-abiding citizen who finds himself in the clutches of the law.

Let us take the case of Nat Le Roy of Brooklyn whose crime consisted of refusing Patrolman Torro's order to move on. Nat Le Roy was arrested and an enlightened magistrate sentenced him to twenty days in the workhouse. A colossal crime which was punished most fittingly. Will Nat Le Roy be like the mole on the cheek which remains simply a mole on the cheek when left alone? Or will twenty days in the workhouse prove sufficiently annoying to make a cancer of the mole? Twenty days for refusing to move on!

But Nat Le Roy is not the only one who has been impressed with the majesty of the law. There are thousands of others. There is Mrs. Henrietta Mankato who protested to Motorcycle Patrolman Tietler when he gave her husband a summons for parking his car in a restricted area. Motorcycle Patrolman Tietler was exceedingly annoyed. He called the patrol wagon and Mrs. Mankato was taken to the police station. Mr. Mankato pleaded with Tietler to make the summons returnable on the following week because he was to take an injured child to the hospital, but the policeman would not listen and insisted upon arresting Mrs. Mankato, although Mankato offered to drive them to the police station. Maybe this little comedy will never amount to much. But it may perhaps explain why juries sometimes free real criminals.

Ernst Stiles, fifteen years old, graduated from high school with high honors; but because he was colored there was not much of an opportunity for him to gain a livelihood by utilizing his high-school training. So he became a bootblack. Ernst Stiles became a criminal because he offered to shine shoes on the private property of the Long Island Station of the Pennsylvania Railroad terminal. For this terrible crime he was seized by an intrepid policeman and haled before a magistrate. The magistrate gave the youth the alternative of paying a fine of five dollars or serving two days in jail, which was not much of an alternative after all. He was finger-printed and mugged and went to jail for two days. Another lad, Anthony Julian, eighteen, pleaded guilty to the same charge and received the same sentence.

There have been hundreds of other boys who have had a taste of jail life and finger-printing for violating the majesty of the law. Several months ago the Police Department of the City of New York began to conduct a crusade against sidewalk bootblacks. Each Sunday the brave guardians of the law, armed with pistols and blackjacks, would back up a wagon against the curb in a certain locality and pile in a dozen or more ragged street urchins whose only crime consisted of trying to earn a living by polishing shoes. As nearly all of them could not pay a fine they went to jail. The more sensitive ones received a life-long impression of the majesty of the law. As there must have been several neurotics or even potential paranoiacs in the group, it will perhaps not be far-fetched to say that this little episode may be the starting point of a career of wrong-doing. Injustice is often a severe psychic trauma which will later yield unfortunate returns. Any doctor who devotes himself to a study of mental health and its disorders can trace criminal tendencies in many to justice misapplied.

Sometime ago twenty-eight boys scaled a five-foot iron fence surrounding a school playground and began to play. From the Bensonhurst precinct came a patrol wagon and carried them all away to the police station. This happened on a Sunday, and getting bail on Sunday is not an easy matter. Neither was there sufficient food in the precinct to feed all the youngsters. But there they had to remain till the magistrate's court opened the next morning and an enlightened magistrate freed them all. Their arrest for playing on school property and their confinement in the precinct station may in several cases have been sufficiently irritating to cause an innocent mole on the cheek to become a destroying cancer.

Police stupidity is very frequently responsible for arousing an all-consuming hatred for the law. Mohamid Ali was slugged by three Westchester Parkway policemen when he tried to board a New York-bound bus with his wife, two children, and a sister. The three brave cops beat the Turk into unconsciousness with blackjacks while one of them drew a pistol and threatened to shoot protesting spectators. Why all this rumpus? "They figured he was a Communist, on account of his red shirt," Chief Byrne explained. Mohamid Ali should not have worn a red shirt, and because he did his skull was fractured by the guardians of the law who hate all people who wear red shirts, "on account they may be Communists."

Louis Silverstein, also, will have an everlasting love for cops and the law. Louis Silverstein is sixteen and several months ago he was in the yard of P.S. 19 in Brooklyn, watching several youths play cards. Suddenly the cry went up: "A cop!" The players scurried away, but Louis, because of a recent operation for appendicitis, was not so fleet as the others. The brave policeman, Patrolman Martin Milano, came upon Louis. With a swing of his club he felled him. Then as the boy lay prostrate on the ground, Milano struck him once on the legs and once on the shoulders. All this for watching some boys playing cards. Louis will not only carry the scars of broken bones all his life. He will also have a tremendous respect for the law.

That is how most cop-haters are made. The paranoiacs not only become cop-haters; they also become cop-killers, and they do not care which cop they kill. The mysterious sniper who used a Maxim silencer and killed a score of policemen in a Middle Western city sometime ago may have had his legs broken by one of them. There is usually a reason for everything.

A gorilla may get twenty years for rubbing out a gangster who tried to "muscle in." But John D. Pettet will spend the rest of his life in White Plains Jail as a result of the sixth contempt order his wife, Mrs. Clara L. Pettet, has obtained against him. Originally Mr. Pettet went to jail for alimony arrears. As soon as he paid these, Mrs. Pettet obtained another arrest order based on a new arrears which piled up while Pettet was in jail for the previous arrears. As soon as he paid the second arrears, Pettet was jailed for still other arrears. And so this will go on. Pettet has no chance to escape this vicious cycle, because when he is in jail arrears are certain to pile up. Pettet has to all intents and purposes been sentenced to life imprisonment.

There are many more instances, and there is not much point in repeating them all. This article concerns not what the law does to the real criminal, but to the average man and woman in the street. More often than not it is not the criminal who finds himself in the clutches of the law. It is the man or woman who violates a traffic law, or the boy who shines shoes, or plays ball in a schoolyard. There is no gainsaying

that a grave injustice is committed when an adult or a child is arrested for some trivial offense and sentenced to jail for it.

With the majority of people nothing may ever come of the incident, but in the case of the neurotic or potential paranoiac the initial psychic trauma of an arrest for shining shoes or playing ball will leave a lifelong impression. It will result in contempt for the law and for those who enforce it. It will result in sympathy for real criminals, and may explain why certain juries can be so easily "hung" or why a real criminal will go scot free.

Real prophylaxis in medicine begins with taking care of the little ills to prevent them from becoming big ones. The mole on the cheek should not be irritated, because it may become a cancer and kill. Neither should the ordinary chest cold because it may result in pneumonia which will also kill. It is not the specialist in medicine who saves the greatest number of lives. It is the general practitioner. In the administration of the law it is the same. It is not the judges of the higher courts who can do the most to prevent little crimes from becoming big ones or criminals being made of people who have no intention of becoming criminals. Real prophylaxis in crime lies with the policeman and the magistrate. Jail sentences for shining shoes or refusing to move on will not prevent crime but foster it. If the irritative little incidents of the law were eliminated, it would be regarded with greater respect. The policeman who slugs a man because he wears a red shirt and looks like a Communist, and the magistrate who sentences a bootblack to jail because he shines shoes on private property, are the real criminals, because by these acts they are promoting crime. It is time for reform of the law, not only for the good of all of us whom the law affects, but also for the law itself.

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# Has the Bible a Place in Education?

ROBERT T. WESTON

Perhaps the commonest request of parents in Sunday School is that their children may be taught the Bible. From Fundamentalists to Unitarians, the request is the same—although the reason may be different. However, it is worth noting some of the background of this request.

The average Unitarian making this—to him—reasonble request firmly believes that a rather thorough knowledge of the Bible is given in orthodox church Sunday Schools. They want their children to know it also, but to know it better. They find that their own children are not taught much Bible, and that they cannot give it back.

Some of these Unitarians therefore take their children out of the Unitarian church school and place them in orthodox Sunday Schools deliberately, because they feel that there, at least, the children will really be taught the Bible. Others who look wistfully at orthodox church schools say of the usual Unitarian church school curriculum: "My children get that in public school. I don't want them just to repeat what they get there. The church school can't do it as well. It might at least give them a good knowledge of the Bible." I have great sympathy for these people. I wish that it might be possible to do it. But I know that they are asking for the pot of gold at the foot of the rainbow. It just is not there.

*Time* Magazine, in the April 19th, 1948, issue, gives in its "Religion" section a resumé of an article in the magazine, *Religious Education,* for March-April which covers this idea. You feel that at least the orthodox Sunday Schools get the children well acquainted with the Bible. They in turn are worried and look wistfully at the Catholics who are at least supposed to be well-grounded in what they believe, whether through the Bible or other means. But the article from which *Time* quotes tells a shocking story which also confirms what psychologists have been telling us about the ability of children to grasp what we teach.

Religious educators have been trying to tell us the facts for a long time. We either have not heard or we have not understood. But the elemental facts are these: In teaching, it is most important to know the capacity of the pupil to receive and understand the knowledge you wish him to receive and understand, and to realize that that capacity is limited by the age level of the child. It is as important to know what you want to teach him, and why, and to have a good grasp of its relation to the present age and the child's life.

With this background you must be willing to limit the knowledge you wish to teach to fit the limitations of the child and willing to wait before trying to do more until the child has reached an age at which he can receive and understand what you want him to know.

You would not try to teach the Bible to your pet cat or dog. You know it cannot be done. You would not waste time trying to teach it to the most intelligent of the apes. You know it would be impossible. Yet what we do when we try to teach it to children is often quite as foolish—and for the same reasons. We even try to teach children in a language they understand very little, if at all, and which we ourselves hardly use. These things are forcefully illustrated in the article reported in *Time.*

*Time's* digest of the original article was careful and thorough. The facts show that you and I have been harboring illusions about orthodox and Catholic church schools. Briefly, the article stated that out of a class of fifty college sophomores who had just finished a five-week study of the Bible in a course on religion, an examination showed that eight or nine of them really had a trustworthy knowledge of the Bible. The rest were under the general impression that there was no difference between the Old and New Testaments, but that Jesus appeared here and there in both, now giving the Ten Commandments to Moses, now tempting Job. The Bible actually covers ideas and events over a period of more than fifteen hundred years of history that can, in part, be verified; yet these students had the impression that everything in the Bible had happened at about the same time and place! There was no difference, so far as they were concerned, between the time of Abraham and Jacob, and that of Jesus and Paul!

They all believe that the Bible taught a single clear

ethical code throughout, and that the whole Bible was informed by a sanctity to such an extent that they believed it as a whole—without knowing much of what was in it, and in spite of being confused about that little.

God, as a result of this kind of Biblical knowledge, was to them a "somewhat arbitrary, yet sentimental, old man with a tendency to rap people's knuckles when they failed to show him proper respect."

Seven of the fifty students were Roman Catholic; they shared the same ideas as the others and could not be distinguished from them by their answers. The answers were of this character throughout.

Unless you are one of those whose ideas are of the same character as those of the sophomores, these findings should clear the air somewhat for you in this question of teaching the Bible. These were not Unitarians; they were the product of various kinds of orthodox Sunday Schools. This was what Sunday School had given them of the Bible, even with a five-week college study to correct it. Said the author, "It appears that in its teaching of the Bible, the Sunday School is doing more harm than good." One decisive reason which he advances is that the Bible at best is a difficult literature even for adults.

Can you begin to see now why modern church schools are using Biblical material very sparingly? It is not because we do not want the next generation to know the Bible; it is because we want them to have a chance to know it as it should be known. This is a knowledge that can not be gained in church school at the age-level of young children's classes. It is a knowledge which requires a mental age-level beyond that at which the average child stops going to Sunday School. You can, it is true, teach something of the Bible to the children, but after you examine what the child takes in of what you give him, you are likely to be chagrined at what you have accomplished.

Yet, if you will carefully examine what you are expecting of the child, you will see that you are asking the impossible of him as well as of his teachers.

Little childen of nursery and kindergarten age have no capacity for understanding past time. If it happened a thousand years ago, it was just yesterday to the child. You cannot convey to him an understanding of the fact of long ago; he lives and thinks in the present tense. Tell him of long ago and he translates it to the present tense automatically; the past tense hardly exists for him even for a few minutes back. He must develop a memory which takes in a good deal of his own past before he can comprehend any past—and then it takes a long time before he can develop a time-sense into which to fit ideas of history and long ago to establish both proportion and sequence in history. Similarly with space: show a child a map, and Palestine and New York are both just outside the door to him. He must reach a mental age at which he can grasp such things. If, before he reaches that age, you seek to fill his mind with knowledge of Biblical persons and events, you achieve what the examination of fifty college sophomores showed—you simply fix those persons and events in his mind as contemporary with each other, and, to some extent, with him. It not only creates a mental chaos; it makes more difficult the attempt to teach him the true facts and relations later when he is old enough to understand.

Or do you want your child to think that just yesterday an old man named "God" was telling a big man next door to kill every living thing except his own relatives? (Samuel, Saul, and the Amalekites.) Do you want your child to believe that that old man at the same time was telling another man to build a big ship, take his family and two of each kind of animal on board, and leave the rest, because God was going to drown everyone else because they were so wicked? (Noah and the ark.) Do you want your child to believe that a good man named Jesus taught that God loved everyone but was going to send the bad people to burn forever—the child remembering that he is often "bad"? Or do you want your child to believe that the good Jesus and the savage Samuel are both faithful expressions of the will of God and at the same time? That Jacob, the shrewd and dishonest trickster, was a favorite of God and correspondingly was rewarded at the same time—just yesterday—that the good Jesus was allowed to die on the cross? That just yesterday God killed all the first-born children of Egypt because Moses and Pharaoh were quarreling?

This is exactly the sort of problem with which we are faced, and there is no good solution of it short of waiting until the child has reached an age at which the child can be taught these stories in their proper sequence and meaning.

But parents will not let us do this. They insist: "I want my child (in the kindergarten) taught the Bible." "I want my child to know the good old Bible stories." Shall we give in? Are we willing that our children shall have that smattering of knowledge which is worse than ignorance because it is garbled and misleading knowledge? Do you wonder why children are often deeply worried by problems originating with Bible stories? Of course, not all children are affected alike or equally, and there are some who simply do not take any of it in, while a very few may have such exceptional home teaching on the subject that they do get a fair and unharmful amount of knowledge. They are not many. We are concerned with the average who make up our classes. What shall we give them?

The answer will rest largely with parents. After all, the church school belongs mostly to them. We will not be able in any church school to do what we think is the best and most effective teaching of religion. Our work will always be a compromise between the parents, the community, and our own groping toward a better way. After all, the parents buy the new-born child teddy bears and alphabet blocks, wind-up toys, and little books. By the time he can crawl, they are already looking at tricycles. In their eagerness to have him both a baby and a grown-up they are always buying beyond his level, teaching him years ahead of his comprehension and interest, and we shall always have to wrestle with such problems. Unless the parents, themselves, take the task of teaching in the church school, and thus learn for themselves the futility of this tendency, the Bible will remain a major problem, and not a help, in religious teaching.

If we want the Bible taught we must recognize that it is an adult literature in English that is strange even to adults. True enough, it gives us many pictures from the childhood of the race, but we do not want our children taught the ethics or the religion of primitive tribes. And we must realize that the richest and loftiest parts of the Bible which glow with an ethics toward which we move, and which we would like our children to share, are cast in a language which even

adults find difficult. In teaching the Bible to children, no church school ever does anything with the great prophets, and few ever get far with the teachings of Jesus. They bog down in the blood-and-thunder, cops-and-robbers, cowboy-and-Indian sections, to use figures of speech which give a comparison in terms of child interest and child interpretation. This, then, becomes the ethical-religious heritage of the child.

The place for the Bible is in the high school and the college classes where maturing minds can grasp and properly relate the stories in their true significance. There is a place for the Bible, and that place is in the literature studies of the schools and in the adult classes of churches, religious courses of colleges, and Great Books study courses. It stands at the head of any list of great books, but it does not stand alone. Together with the mythology of the Greeks, it forms a foundation for all modern literature and modern ethics—both of which, you must realize, are adult studies.

But there is a place for some of it in the church school. Perhaps something of Jesus' story can be taught young children in the primary grades. If this is done it should not be cluttered up with Old Testament stories being taught about the same years. Neither should the prophets be dragged in at Christmastime to make them say what they never meant. Unitarians have been guilty of telling the Christmas story as if, from Isaiah on, they had all been prophesying the coming of Jesus, and thus we denied the very principles of loyalty to truth on which we rest our faith. The words of the prophets which are commonly twisted to seem a prophecy of the coming of a saviour, a Messiah, or Jesus, properly referred only to the people Israel personified in one person, as we speak of "Columbia" or "Uncle Sam." The confusion of the words of the prophets with the idea of Jesus is part of the confusion which comes from the ignorant teaching of the Bible to children who are not mentally ready for it. Jesus was inspired by the teachings of the prophets, and that is their sole significance in his life.

But let something of the stories of Jesus the good man be taught to little children. Let them be the beautiful stories which came out of his life—and without the horror tale of the crucifixion. In later grades we can teach the Old Testament stories as fairy tales, like the Hans Anderson tales, for they are not different in origin, even though they came from a different people and some of them have more truth. In telling them this way we can give the children some understanding of the beginning of the Bible and the fact that it includes much that we disapprove. We can tell them something of how the Bible came to be written, and why it has many mistakes in it. We can even lay some foundation for understanding how it grew over the long centuries. But the real understanding must be taught in adolescence and maturity, and must wait until then, or it will never be grasped. Moses and Jesus will be contemporaries in the minds of the children; Jonah and the whale, Adam and Eve and the Apple, Methusaleh, David and St. Paul, will exist side by side in the youth's mind and that of the later adult as being all of the same time and the same level of ethics and religious insight.

No wonder the author of the article quoted said that Sunday Schools which try to teach the Bible as most do today do more harm than good. Rankin and J. Parnell Thomas, Bilbo and Gerald L. K. Smith, Huey Long, John Dillinger, and Westbrook Pegler may well be logical products of such religious Biblical education. Exponents of intolerance and bigoted enemies of independent thought, they interpret in their attitude the ethics of the Bible at its worst, along with the Ku Klux Klan, and call it Christianity, or they become desperate enemies of society.

I want my children to know the Bible. But I want them to have the kind of knowledge that I can respect and trust. I do not want them inoculated with it so that they associate it with boredom· nor do I want them filled with confusion. I know they will be exposed to the misunderstandings which make the term "Bible Belt" a term of derision, the misunderstandings which are current among those who are taught Bible before they are ready for it. Therefore, I believe that we must teach some Bible in the church school to give our children a better foundation on which to stand, but I cringe at the way we must teach it, and I do it myself for the older classes so that I may bear the responsibility and try to meet the necessity of presenting it so that the child will get only as much of it as he can properly understand and not get it wrong.

I cringe, because I know that many children miss much, and so have garbled knowledge in spite of the best I can do. It is inconvenient for the parent to bring them, or someone is ill in the family, or some other problem arises and their attendance is spasmodic. I would rather that they did not know of the Bible at all until they can really have some understanding of it as it should be understood. But we cannot shield them from the misinformation of their friends, and so we must give something of this adult library to children and hope to do it in such a fashion that they will be fortified against misinformation.

But some will say: "Would you not have your children know something of the great spiritual passages, the lovely psalms, the beauty and dignity of its best, as it has meant hope and comfort and help to people throughout all our religious past?" And I would answer: "Yes—if I can do it so that they can understand, but understanding must be possible." First must come living experience of men and women who show them its value in their own lives and by the way in which they cherish it. If the parents do not cherish and use it, we can hardly teach it to their children without seeming to reflect upon the parents' neglect of it. And I would remind you of how many beautiful passages in great literature have been bruised and ruined by the plodding analysis of uninspired teachers who simply taught "by the book" the beauties of Shakespeare and other great writers. This love has to be shared and caught. It takes a great teacher to communicate this richness of feeling in a great passage to a child· and such teachers are rare.

We can no longer ignore the knowledge of child capacity and understanding of children which modern psychology has made available to us. If we use it well and wisely, we shall be able to select our Bible material for teaching and time it so that the Bible will be more than just a Great Book. We can make of it a well of living water from which our youth may safely drink without the danger of poisoning. But if we fail to do this, we go on corrupting our faith as too many churches have been doing for their people throughout the past. Knowledge must wait upon capacity—always—and capacity waits upon mental de-

velopment. How often, by being in a hurry, we have driven the child to the conclusion that the Bible is dull and boresome!

It is capacity to comprehend truth and life, to evaluate experience and to expand it as a basis for greater understanding, to which our church schools are now directing their energies. Some of this does overlap what the public school offers the child. We hope for a different emphasis and a more spiritual treatment of the subject in church school, yet we recognize that many a public school teacher is a far better teacher of spiritual and religous and ethical truth than we can be with our limited time. We do not therefore avoid the subject; we are happy that it relates so wholesomely to the church school task. Our great concern is that the child shall have a foundation of understanding and enriching experience, awakened sympathies and appreciations which will make the Scriptures live when he comes to them. If that foundation is not created first, Scripture is wasted on the child. Words must derive their meaning from experiences which give significance to explanation of them and later reading of the word.

Therefore, we are trying to rebuild church school curriculum to adapt it to the child's needs and capacities, and aim at the development of those capacities for understanding and appreciation, and sympathies, which will enable the Bible to become something more than just a treasury of folk lore—a literature which they love and use.

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# Ethical Religion—What Is It?

LEO HIRSCH

Perhaps we can get a clearer understanding of Ethical Religion if we try to ascertain what it is not. Ethical Religion is not theology and is not based on theological doctrine. The weakness of our contemporary civilization is that it has substituted theology for Ethical Religion and has made doctrinal belief the only means of salvation. Ethical Religion is not religiosity (formal religion). It is a living, acting, militant applied religion. There are certain dogmas, creeds, and rituals that are the essence of present-day organized religion and that take precedence over ethical conduct. Ethical Religion does not belong to this group, as it is neither dogmatic nor authoritarian. It is not anti-Semitic nor anti-racial, and anyone who studies the trends of our times must admit that some religions are definiely anti-Semitic and anti-racial.

Ethical Religion does not concern itself primarily with individual development to the neglect of the social order. It is not a compromiser with the world as it is; it is willing and determined to transform it or be broken in the effort to conquer it. It does not take the manufactured standards either of orthodox religion or the dominant business world but aids in creating the standards of value needed for a constantly changing society. It does not repress the critical faculty in its members but is ever eager to encourage the study of the issues that touch foundations. It is not orthodox in claiming for itself to be the embodiment of the whole and final truth of the universe to the detriment of all other religious beliefs. It is heterodox in its viewpoint regarding religion, politics, and economics and maintains that the great lesson of the war is the full responsibility of man for his world of human affairs. It is not an exclusive religion with a high fence around it for those who are in perfect agreement with its tenets but is inclusive, including all peoples of differing religious views. So much for what Ethical Religion is not.

Ethical Religion has its roots in the dim past and was born when man came into consciousness and self-consciousness and began to distinguish between right and wrong. So it existed long before the historic religions were born and will survive long after most of them pass and are forgotten.

Ethical Religion has no dogmas, no creeds, no rituals, no superstitions and no organized priesthood. It takes complete possession of the individual and the group who are dedicated to it because they have a profound self-respect for their inner natures, which arises from a belief in the intrinsic worth and dignity of man's nature. It includes not only the individual but all of humanity.

It puts first things first and therefore places its main emphasis on the supremacy of ethics which it deems not a by-product or an ingredient of religion but religion in its truest sense, for righteous living was the fibre out of which man weaved the many different patterns of religion. The noblest Scriptures that man possesses, whether they are the Upanishads, the Old or New Testament, the Koran or the immortal Dialogues of Plato: they all came from the heart and brain of man. They are not the direct revelations of God to man; they are the revelations of man's spirit, the disclosures of what life has meant to these great souls. These religious geniuses who revealed to us these ethical truths have been the vital centers of spiritual power in the development of Ethical Religion. They have done for Ethical Religion what the creative geniuses have done for art, music, and philosophy.

Ethical Religion is based on a profound faith in man and his spiritual possibilities. Its main objectives are the achievement of harmonious human relations and the building of a nobler civilization.

Reverence for human life is its outstanding characteristic, and self-reliance is the trait of the individuals who belong to it. Its followers clearly realize that, if there are to be no more wars, it is up to man to prevent their occurrence. If we desire that all human beings on this earth should enjoy more love, brotherhood, peace and joy than they have had up to now, it is up to man to build and create that better world. The rebuilding and transforming of this world will not be accomplished by a reliance on some supernatural being to do it; it will be achieved by the *consecrated hands of men.* Men must translate their spiritual powers into the moral and social reconstruction of the world's areas of backwardness and suffering.

From these basic statements, we can now proceed to cover the framework with some positive interpretation.

Ethical Religion, which I believe to be man's noblest aspiration and response to what is highest and truest in human life and experience, cannot be maintained in some water-tight compartment of the mind, unaf-

fected by and unrelated to the total world of facts existing in the human world. Ethical Religion must be unmistakably real and in complete conformity with all that we know to be true.

Ethical Religion, to be a vital, dynamic influence in human affairs, must have two major objectives, both of which are of equal importance. They are the opposite sides of the same protective shield: one is not valid without the other. They are much like freedom and security, one cannot be achieved without the other. Both must be ever jointly pursued.

The first objective of Ethical Religion is the development of moral character, so that every human being may express the wealth of his personality and thus attain his ultimate destiny by bringing into being the world-wide brotherhood of man. This moral character is to be won through the performance of our duty in all of our relationships. This man whom I meet daily, what is important about him? Is it his attitude toward the unknown? No. What is supremely important is what kind of a person is he as a father, a husband, a son; what kind of an employer or employee is he. Does he take pride in performing his civic duties? Does he identify himself with that larger whole that we call Society? These are the essentials.

The second objective is to build a world and a civilization on a nobler basis than that on which it rests today. This effort is important because it expresses a regard for the rights and welfare of other men who share the world with us. It is the voice of conscience come to flower, recognizing humanity's collective needs and aspirations. It we truly desire a creative life for ourselves and others, it is our task to rebuild the world along creative lines. It is this effort that shows us our inseparableness from mankind. It is through this effort that the individual loses his pettiness and selfishness and integrates himself with that larger unity that we call Humanity.

There are many persons in our contemporary world who delude themselves in the belief that they lead a religious and ethical life because they perform their duties in their immediate family relations and in their church obligations, but when it comes to business and industry that of course is another matter! In that area of their activities, if they wish to survive, they are compelled (or at least that is what they believe) to obey the mores of present business and abandon their ethical principles. Ethical Religion must either adapt itself to the world as it is or seek to transform it and change it.

There are many individuals who believe that they can enter a religious fellowship and yet separate themselves from the political and economic life that influences their very thoughts and acts. A religious fellowship that does not cover all the fields of man's life and activities, particularly those areas that are so basic and fundamental to his physical, mental, and spiritual life, such as politics and economics, has very little significance for the thinking man. This attitude inevitably leads to the double standard and weakens and undermines religion's influence.

An organic religious fellowship of interrelated persons bound together by the Ethical Ideal must necessarily ask itself in all sincerity: Can ethics or Ethical Religion and economics and politics be treated as wholly separate from each other, since ethics is a social science which includes the whole of man's life? In the last analysis, the economic life of man deals with human labor and human relations, and so there is hardly any economic problem that is not interwoven with an ethical problem. Whether it be the academic problems of wage scale, the hours of labor, or sanitary conditions, or such more complex problems as industrial representation, constitutionalism, credit and finance, or unemployment —all bristle with ethical and religious questions.

It is our indifference to our political and economic activities, this neglect to utlilize and apply our spiritual forces in these vital areas, that is the prime cause of the chaos and anarchy which now disorder our world, despite our inventions and our ever-increasing control over physical forces. Politics and economics can never be separated from the broader issues of social morality. These activities are wrought into the very structure of man's character and it is as impossible to separate them from man's religious life as it is impossible for the individual to separate himself from mankind.

If religious fellowship means confining oneself to some narrow air-tight compartment, unrelated to life, excepting perhaps to a small segment of it, how are we ever going to develop a social control that should mean power exercised both by society and the cooperating individuals within society to achieve a great common purpose: the abolition of all privilege and the creation of social justice, so that every human personality may have the freedom to develop his spiritual qualities to the nth degree? This premises the development of a new social order and an ethical citizenship that do not as yet exist,

Most of us overlook the stubborn reality that the political and economic framework in which our boys and girls grow up indelibly imposes its shape on their minds and souls as decisively as a mold imposes its shape upon molten iron or melted wax. It is our sacred duty to see that our political and economic mechanism is such that, by its operation, it will help to develop the sense of duty between men toward each other.

The great religious geniuses of the race, including that beloved American, Dr. Felix Adler, grasped the idea that men, to perfect themselves, must also perfect the framework of society in which they grow up and live. This idea was symbolized by such faroff divine events as the Kingdom of the Spirit, Brotherhood of Man, the City of God, the Golden City, etc. Ethical Religion to be vital must translate itself into our political and economic life. Religion to be real and a vital influence must be of one consistent pattern with its underlying ethical thread pervading every activity and interest of man. Ethical Religion is above all else an open-minded religion that keeps abreast of the ever-increasing and enlarging discoveries of truth adapted to the developing mind of man and the expanding life of the world.

The workers, the businessmen, and the managers who believe in Ethical Religion ought to organize themselves into a fellowship determined to transform the entire economic structure into an organization in which all functionaries will be able to perform their duty with efficiency and joy. An economic organization wherein the dangerous power of exploitation of man by man, which is inherent in monopoly capitalism, will be forever eliminated. If our economic order is to remain free and democratic, if it is to work at all, its unlimited power must be used only in the general interest.

Ethical Religion must take a firm stand against any form of economic domination, whether capitalistic or communistic, that denies the rights of the individual. The crusading mission of this religion in the modern

world is to so penetrate and pervade the economic order that it will be re-based and re-motivated. Self-interest must be supplanted by the service motive, the dictator principle by the democratic principle. (That is one of the reasons why Dr. Felix Adler regarded the Business Men's Group of the Ethical Culture Society as of great importance.)

Ethical Religion commands us to dedicate our work to the service and progress of the race and look upon wage, salary, or profit as a mere incident in that process. This type of religion is based on a postulate that cannot be proved, a faith that our sense of duty toward our fellow men is valid, and that for each to put the good of others before his own, or at least equal to his own, is a matter of infinite importance.

For those who sincerely believe in the materialistic creed, this argument has neither sense nor value. This argument is for those who realize that the further progress of the race lies in the realm of the spirit, that mankind in the atomic age cannot survive excepting through the rise of conscience, heroic vision, and creative appeal of the spirit. The ruthless exploitation of the natural and human resources of the world must cease; otherwise the ethical ideal will perish. This kind of social understanding, this kind of ethical responsibility must be nurtured in all the churches. Otherwise they will work their own doom.

Life is a challenging adventure. Its purpose is to evolve in man a nobility of character that will aid him in building and creating the righteous community. Orthodox Christianity emphasizes man's evil nature and stresses its belief that it is only the direct intervention of a supernatural power that can save him. Ethical Religion says that human nature is fundamentally good, that it possesses a growing intelligence and a divine spark that are the most unique and important facts in our universe and that supply him with all the power to transcend his animal instincts and his material desires. Ethical Religion is the standard bearer of man's holy adventure, holding up to him the ethical ideal to guide him, direct him, encourage and inspire him in that most gigantic undertaking of building a better world.

The central idea that I have tried to convey is that man in this universe of ours has a goal—a purpose that transcends anything he has as yet achieved or can as yet understand.

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**Wings of Vision**

In that rare ether where great secrets lie,
Time and his scythe shall pass me quickly by;
All that I was, or ever hope to be
Are there recorded in eternity.

FLORENCE EAKMAN.

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THE FIELD

(*Continued from page* 42)

of understanding. "But journalism," he explained, "is a feature of democracy. Even high government officials tend to sensational journalism in statements for the public. That the behavior of the United States with respect to the smaller nations has improved is beyond question. On larger issues arising out of the war, the country has not been able to arrive at a consistent policy. A contrast is to be found in the British Foreign Office, whose permanent officials impose a certain consistency in spite of such a violent change as that from a Conservative to a Labor government. Permanence is the last thing to be hoped for in American democracy. Our very way of life is journalism."

Misunderstanding goes back all the way to 1898, in the opinion of Juan B. Huyke, Puerto Rico's first native-born Commissioner of Education. When General Miles landed, he notes, "the island had complete government in the hands of Puerto Ricans. Uncle Sam placed every post in the hands of the newly arrived, but failed to tell the islanders it was a temporary change. He was slow in giving us better government. Finally we had self-government. We used to speak of tyranny. We cannot do so now. . . ."

The Island's auditor and former economics professor, Rafael de J. Cordero, thinks the column "an objective and honest appraisal of the factors which underlie current misunderstanding about the aims and motives of the United States in its dealings with foreign countries and peoples." But J. Enamorado Cuesta, an advocate of independence, says that the column shows the attitude of people in the United States toward others by its use of "America" to mean merely the United States. That is a good point! But are there no times when repetitiousness would spoil the force of writing, and when one simply has to change a designation for sake of literary smoothness? A Latin American, of all people, should be sensitive to that need, and be charitable. And as a matter of fact, Mexicans by the thousand refer all the time to Norteamericanos as Americans, and other Latin Americans are forced to use a restricted phrasing they object to intellectually, because at times they cannot escape it. Señor Cuesta is fundamentally correct, however, and it is one thing for writers in foreign lands to use "America" for "United States" if they wish, and quite a different thing for a United States writer to arrogate such a big territory to his own country, even in literary desperation!

One of the few native-born Puerto Rican priests, Father Juan Rivera, suggests that this writer missed the best point: that "misunderstanding about the United States has one source—a superiority complex. Even missionaries suffer from it." Juan Luis Márquez, new editor of *Illustrado,* Puerto Rico's oldest weekly, boils the issue down to big stick versus square deal. "Outside the United States it is not often realized that the country has many honest liberals with the cause of a better world deep in their hearts." But there is another side, too; Señor Márquez believes "Italy is becoming a colony of the United States." He quotes Anna Magnani, the great Italian actress, as convinced the Italian film industry is doomed. "The tragedy is that one of art's media is at Hollywood's mercy."

The movies came in for quite a drubbing at several pairs of hands for their presentation of foreign characters, and American Negroes too, so often, still, in unpleasant roles. But Señor Márquez goes

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# What Is a Miracle?

MAY STRANATHAN

Not long ago the newspapers carried the story of a young woman living in Upper Sandusky, Ohio, who claimed to have been cured by a miracle of a series of illnesses that had kept her in bed for sixteen and a half years. So much interest was shown in this case that she complained it was impossible for her to lead a normal life after her cure, being besieged by visitors, telephone calls, and letters—more than eighty letters a day—all asking about the miracle. These messages came from all parts of the United States.

The popularity of "The Song of Bernadotte" shows a widespread interest in miracles, as also do the stories of rescues during the war, from perils by land and sea, in answer to prayers, though of late years before this time the public seemed to have grown skeptical about miracles, even those of the Bible. Many persons still adhere to the belief that the influence of prayer is shown in the renewed spirit and effort of the imperiled rather than to a direct intervention of God.

The belief in miracles depends on what a miracle really is. We call many things miraculous when we do not mean to claim there was any supernatural intervention. But psychiatrists have suggested that the case of the Upper Sandusky girl was one of hysteria, and when she became convinced there was nothing wrong with her she recovered. The explanation brings to mind the vogue of psychotherapy which had such a run some years ago. This treatment was tried in one of the Pittsburgh churches, and probably in other cities, with the inevitable conclusion that if your disease is functional, religion may cure it, but if your complaint is organic, you will have to call in the doctor.

At the time of the popularity of the revivalist, Alexander Dowie, I lived in Chicago and went once to hear him exhort and to see his church, whose walls were hung with abandoned crutches, straps, and harness for the support of all kinds of cripples; with eyeglasses and ear trumpets, and other devices discarded by those healed by the magic of this portly, bald-headed little man whose personality seemed to me so commonplace. He had no outward form of comeliness, but he had the power to inspire the faith that made them whole, at least for a time. I do not know if there has ever been a systematic following up of such cures.

Sent to report for the *Pittsburgh Dispatch* the outcome of the news that there was to be a miracle performed in McKeesport on a certain evening and at an hour announced by a preacher, I found myself in the midst of a large crowd of curious persons, the majority being women, waiting outside the house in which a blind girl, her pastor and friends, were praying behind closed blinds. It was a chilly evening and after two hours or more had passed with no miracle in sight, the minister came to the door and announced that, for some reason which he did not explain, the miracle had been postponed a couple of weeks and would take place in a town in northern Ohio.

We walked back a mile or more to the streetcar line, a weary and disappointed company, some of the mothers and fathers carrying a sleeping child in their arms and others dragging along by the hand older children who stumbled and tripped. As I listened to the impatient remarks of the crowd I lost my taste for miracles, as well as most of my belief in them.

As a child I believed implicitly in miracles, real ones and not psychological. I regarded the miracle of crossing the arm of the Red Sea on dry land by the fleeing Hebrews just as it was stated in the Bible account, until the wife of a Presbyterian minister told me it was a natural phenomenon, the wind blowing the water back periodically, which allowed the Hebrews to pass over—presumably because Moses knew when to take advantage of the situation. Since then I have read commentators who said the Hebrews were a very poetic and imaginative people. Mary Ellen Chase in her book, *The Bible and the Common Reader,* speaks of the miracles as myths and legends.

Father Divine is said to have performed, over a long period, what would be termed miraculous, in his feeding of the poor of Harlem during the depression and thus keeping up the morale of the people there. He is said to have saved the city of New York millions of dollars in suppressing riots and hunger strikes. He seems to have accomplished this by his own personal influence and faith. How true it is, as Emerson says, that there are resources in human nature on which we have not drawn and which come to the surface in times of crisis and terror.

As to the doubts of some about the genuineness of the intervention of God by coming to the help of humanity in time of peril, a skeptic tells the story of the Scotchman, who, being out in an open boat during a storm, was implored by his companion—busy bailing out water from the bottom of the boat—to pray for help. He insisted that he had never prayed in his life, but, being urged, he finally knelt in the water and said, "Dear Lord, I have never asked you for anything in my life before, and if you will just bring this boat to land, I promise never to ask you for anything again." The story says they landed safe in harbor when the morn was shining clear.

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THE FIELD

(*Continued from page* 55)

further: "If Uncle Sam is so deeply in love with fair play," he asks, "why does he not honor himself by completely wiping out all traces of colonialism in Puerto Rico?" He criticizes the United States handling of sugar—"bitter sugar. Mechanization made it possible for the island to achieve progress with which a quota, first on sugar and lately on refined sugar, is at odds."

In subsequent articles, as in the past, the foreign policy of the United States will be frankly criticized; but no criticisms are helpful which do not carefully balance debits against credits. That is why the reactions of these Puerto Ricans are worth the study of people on the mainland; they are restrained and fair. One anonymous radio commentator in Puerto Rico made a point few people of the United States have probably thought of—the fact that "the United States is the only country of its size without acual need of a second language for everyday use. By and large, the net result has been chauvinism at home and abroad."

—*Worldover Press.*

# The Study Table

### A Memorable Biography

LINCOLN'S SECRETARY: A BIOGRAPHY OF JOHN G. NICOLAY. *By Helen Nicolay. New York: Longmans, Green and Company. 363 pp. $5.00.*

Helen Nicolay is one of the most noted women in America. Author of more than twenty biographies, she has an immense influence on the younger minds of today. This long awaited biography of her father is, however, her most important book. It throws new light on Lincoln and the problems of his time.

John George Nicolay was born in Germany in 1832 and at the age of five came to America. He made his way much as did Lincoln, who trusted him and made him his private secretary. Nobody knew Lincoln as did Nicolay, who was constantly associated with him from the time he became a candidate for the Presidency until his death. After Lincoln's death, it fell to Nicolay to supervise the first important biography of Lincoln. In this work he collaborated with John Hay who had shared the work of the private secretary.

Miss Nicolay clears up many points long in dispute. The tradition in Colorado is that most of the famous ten-volume biography was written in the Hay Cabin in Crystal Park. Miss Nicolay says that only a part of the famous biography was written there, when Hay owned a large track of land including Crystal Park. Helen Hunt Jackson was then a neighbor and Nicolay discussed the political situation with her, gave her his books, and helped form her judgment on literary matters. The present reviewer, after tramping many times through the wilderness that once was Crystal Park, hunting for the remains of Colonel Hay's cabin, and reviewing all the records, vouches for every word Miss Nicolay has written about the Colorado period. Another matter which has perplexed students of the period is why William Dean Howells rather than Nicolay wrote Lincoln's campaign biography. The Nicolay papers are of immense importance for further correction of facts concerning Lincoln. Nicolay, as private secretary, lived in the White House and saw the Lincoln family daily. Lincoln found his best interpreter in Nicolay, who correctly regarded him as "under the hand of the Lord," and "a Christian without a creed." In all these ways Nicolay had patterned his own life. John Hay who knew Nicolay as Nicolay knew Lincoln, wrote of his friend, "You have never seen a man purer in heart and in life, of higher principles and nobler thoughts." All this is true, and now we know the part he played in the most difficult period in American history. Today the gratitude of all of us goes out to his eminent daughter, who, with all the greatness of her father, has made America her debtor for her careful and important books. And the crown of all her literary career is this biography of her father.

C. A. HAWLEY.

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### The Range of Humanist Thought

HUMANISM AS A PHILOSOPHY. *By Corliss Lamont. New York: Philosophical Library. 350 pp. $3.75.*

Corliss Lamont has provided in this book a very readable and understandable presentation of the range of Humanist thought. He gives a clear picture of the sources, traditions, and concepts from which Humanist principles have been drawn. His preference for naturalistic Humanism has not dulled his sympathy for other kinds. The religious Humanist wishes that Lamont had been as up to date and scientific in interpreting or defining religion and the religious in the light of modern scholarship as he was with naturalism.

Mr. Lamont's discussions of man, the universe, and scientific method are positive and sound. The concluding chapter is an affirmation of life, outlining Humanist ethics, relationships between individual happiness and the social good, and espousing democracy. He states: "For Humanists the familiar formulation of 'the greatest happiness for the greatest number' expresses the merging of an ethical and a democratic ultimate." We would add that it must move on to the principle of the greatest happiness or the greatest good for all men.

Those who want to have an understanding and appreciation of the broad scope and practical implications of modern Humanism will find this book a necessary addition to their library. It also provides a keen challenge to the modern theologians who preserve Theism by intricate definitions.

RANDALL S. HILTON.

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# Correspondence

### World News Conference

TO UNITY:

Friendship depends on mutual recognition of the other's goodness. Friendly neighbors do not get excited about unimportant incidents. The causes of conflict include fear, anger, suspicion, and tensions from previous conflicts. These are all forms of excitement.

Newspapers, radio, and probably television suffer from the temptation to profit from public interest in exciting events. To them bad news is good news. Foreign personalities are built up into bogey men. Foreign ideologies are misunderstood and misinterpreted. What is different is shown as sinister. This is mutual. Foreign ambitions are magnified into plans for world conquest. All these distortions create excitement which is the enemy of peace. By mutual slander the cold war is intensified and the arms race accelerated. Exciting news is a very expensive form of free speech.

Could the nations relax and be peaceful more easily if we would call off these barking dogs? Could the United Nations stay that way if we could get the press and radio to stop name-calling? Could they be induced to cultivate calmness in giving the news about foreign activities and ideologies?

Little excitements grow into big ones. World peace depends on freedom from excitement. I suggest that the United Nations organize an international news conference to promote objectivity and friendship in the news. Some kind of United Nations Authority might be set up to introduce standards of truth and mutual

respect in the newspapers, and to umpire and arbitrate the battles of the cold war.

Would the armaments race wither away if we could arrange for a world-wide moratorium on exciting news?

HERBERT STURGES.

*Tucson, Arizon.*

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### Reply to Yarros

To UNITY:

The late Elbert Hubbard, in referring to his little periodical, *The Philistine,* used sometimes to say: "Those who don't know how to take it, had better not." Your subscribers, I am sure, are broad-minded people and will know how to "take" Victor S. Yarros' recent article, "Jesus—Without Tears." But nonetheless I feel that such articles are regrettable because so one-sided and incomplete. If the article could have had a final paragraph something like the following, I believe it would have come nearer the truth:

> And yet, in spite of all the difficulties in knowing exactly what Jesus of Nazareth said and did nearly two thousand years ago, and in spite of the contradictions that appear in the various records written by others, years afterwards, the fact remains that in the influence he exerted upon the world, and the blessings he brought to humanity, Jesus of Nazareth stands unique and supreme.

To begin with, I think the title is unfortunate, as indicating an inappropriate approach. The words "Without Tears" may express an attitude of superiority to the element of compassion which is central in Jesus' life and message. Such expressions as "He was moved with compassion," and "He gave his life a ransom for many" are far removed from a strictly scientific attitude, and more powerful in the effect on human conduct. Much as we may feel that sheer logic ought to be most powerful, we are faced with the fact that emotion is the stronger motivating factor; the ideal being, of course, a proper balance between the two.

In such a discussion, I submit that the legalistic approach and treatment are unsatisfactory. The sum of all the facts, even those which are known positively to be facts, still may not represent the whole truth. Sometimes one cannot see the forest for the trees. Saint Paul wrote: "The letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life."

To set forth the spirit of the message and teaching of Jesus is way beyond the scope of this letter, and even further beyond the capacity of the writer. But that there was, and is, such a spirit, is part of the faith of this particular skeptic. It is something known even to this avowed agnostic. Otherwise how can we account for the untold thousands of those who willingly have suffered martyrdom for the cause of Christianity?

In a very practical way at the present moment I mention the Parliamentary Socialist Christian Group in England. Here I believe is an outstanding instance of Christian principles applied in the realms of politics and economics, in an effort to bring about a new social order based on peace, freedom, and social justice. That very great Christian leader, William Temple, late Archbishop of Canterbury, used to say he was a Socialist because he was a Christian. The movement in the Non-conformist church groups in Britain has been equally powerful in bringing into being the present Labor Government, with its program of enormously significant social changes.

The fact that sectarian rivalry exists does not change the inherent spirit and message. Unfortunately the term "Christian" sometimes is given a sectarian connotation, as distinguished from, for example, Jewish. I am not interested in any such narrow theological meaning. The Bible traces this philosophy back to the ancient Hebrew prophets and folklore. Fundamentally, what we are discussing is a world movement based on the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man. Not long ago I heard a distinguished Scottish professor of divinity give his definition of the real spirit of Christianity in this very brief and simple way: "Good will as expressed in social service, and if necessary in sacrificial service."

This rises above doctrine, dogma, creeds, and other impediments, and it makes a good place to bring these casual comments by a layman to a close. Except to say that it is a pity to see such a keen intellect as that of Victor S. Yarros devoted to a contemplation of what might be compared to the waste material from a diamond mine, instead of to a proper appreciation of the value and beauty of the gems produced by the mine.

HUGH STRONG.

*San Diego, California.*

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### Facts, Not Imagination, the Need

To UNITY:

I do not concede for a moment that a conscientious and impartial study of the problem of Jesus, the carpenter's son, requires the aid of imagination. All that we think to know of that figure we owe to the so-called Gospels. No other historian or biographer throws the faintest light on that interesting problem. Those who claim absolute perfection for Jesus must support the claim by appeals to the only record available. This record, to be sure, is far from satisfactory, as Mr. Luce points out. We need not, he holds, pay too much attention to this or that miracle. We should certainly make allowances for naive piety, for credulity, for poor memories or doubtful traditions. All this is true, but, if we have no right to pick and choose alleged incidents, why choose the ones that please the orthodox and not those that displease them?

Reject the water-wine miracle, but why not also reject the incredible healing miracles? In commending the driving of the money-changers from the defiled temple, we must not overlook the use of the whip in violation of the resist-not-evil doctrine. In dealing with an ideal man, the incidents of the fig tree or the Gadarene swine present serious difficulties. Why gloss them over instead of facing the record? Huxley, in his famous paper on the Gadarene swine episode, did not deem it necessary or desirable to drag in imagination. My loyalty, like Huxley's, is to truth. Wounding sensibilities is unfortunate business, but, if the sensibilities are the product of superstition and delusion, we cannot spare them at the expense of intellectual honesty and straight, logical thinking.

I revere the major Hebrew prophets, and would not object in the smallest voice to awarding Jesus a place among them, if the evidence, candidly considered, warranted that honor. The only available evidence affords no such warrant. No upright judge asks a jury to use its "imagination" in contempt of the record, the actual weight of the evidence in the given case.

VICTOR S. YARROS.

*La Jolla, California.*

# Western Unitarian Conference

RANDALL S. HILTON, Executive Secretary
700 Oakwood Boulevard, Chicago 15, Illinois

## APPEAL REPORT

The Western Conference performance in the 1948-49 United Unitarian Appeal was not a failure, neither was it an outstanding success. The monetary goal was missed by $2,798.63. With ninety-one per cent of the combined shares raised, the Western Conference ranked fourth among the six Regional Areas participating in the Appeal. Credit should be given to the following churches which reached or exceeded their quota:

Bloomington, Illinois
Chicago, Illinois
  Beverly Fellowship
  First Church
  Free Religious Fellowship
Evanston, Illinois
Geneva, Illinois
Shelbyville, Illinois
Urbana, Illinois
Ft. Wayne, Indiana
Hobart, Indiana
Indianapolis, Indiana
Iowa City, Iowa
Topeka, Kansas
Louisville, Kentucky
  First Church
  Clifton
Ann Arbor, Michigan
Detroit, Michigan
Jackson, Michigan
Angora, Minnesota
Duluth, Minnesota
Hanska, Minnesota
St. Paul, Minnesota
Virginia, Minnesota
St. Louis, Missouri
Lincoln, Nebraska
Omaha, Nebraska
Cincinnati, Ohio
  First Church
Dayton, Ohio
Toledo, Ohio
Madison, Wisconsin

The following churches, while not reaching their quotas, did increase their contributions over the previous year:

Davenport, Iowa
Flint, Michigan
Kalamazoo, Michigan
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

The figures upon which this listing is based are those of the Appeal books at the time of closing, May 10, 1949. It is known that some churches not listed raised their share but it was late in getting into the Appeal office. Also some are credited with having made it, because late contributions last year were on this year's books.

## APPEAL FOR 1949-50

At its meeting in May the Corporation of the United Unitarian Appeal set the goal for 1949-50 at $275,000. The Corporation departed from previous procedures by setting up a Campaign Planning Committee consisting of the executive officers of the participating organizations. This provides for the regional areas to be in on the planning of the campaign for the first time. This committee met in New York on June 21 and 22, 1949.

As a result of this meeting there will be established in each of the regional areas a regional campaign committee. The first meeting of the Western Unitarian Conference Appeal Committee will be held during the Geneva Conference at College Camp. Further plans include asking each church to appoint an Appeal Chairman. Early in the fall a letter will go to all of the churches, requesting that a goal of from eleven to fifteen per cent of their operating budget be selected and be made as a pledge to the United Appeal. It is hoped that these pledges will be in by October 20. The Campaign Planning Committee has also designated Thanksgiving Sunday as Appeal Sunday and is asking as many churches as possible to organize their Appeal efforts around this Sunday.

The effectiveness of the Unitarian Movement in America depends largely upon the success of this year's United Appeal Campaign. The importance of liberal religion in these times is obvious to all. What is being asked can be accomplished.

## FELLOWSHIP UNITS

A new Fellowship Unit has been formed at South Bend, Indiana. This makes the total number of Fellowships in the Conference seven. Special mention should be made of the support which these Units have given the United Appeal. Six of them gave a total of $176.75. Members of the Boulder, Colorado, Fellowship, the first one organized, gave $93.75. Congratulations to Boulder and also to Ames, Iowa, which contributed $58.

## UNITARIAN PLANNING COUNCIL

An over-all Unitarian planning council is in the process of formation. There has been a long-felt need for the coordination, analysis, and synthesis of the various Unitarian agencies. Heretofore there has been no means by which this could be done. The Commission on Planning and Review is a creature of the By-laws of the American Unitarian Association and is solely responsible to it. The planning council idea has been implicit in reports of the Commission. Initial steps in setting up a Planning Council were taken at a meeting of the Special Committee appointed for this purpose held in New York on June 23. It is hoped that the actual organization will be established in October at the time of the Board meetings of the various agencies in Boston.

## ERNEST KUEBLER

Rev. Ernest W. Kuebler, first Dean of the Geneva Institute, Director of the Division of Education of the American Unitarian Association, has been elected Executive Vice-President of the American Unitarian Association.

## GRANT BUTLER

Rev. Grant Butler, formerly minister at Des Moines, and now Minister-at-large for the American Unitarian Association has been made Acting Director of the Department of Unitarian Extension and Church Maintenance. Mr. George G. Davis, the former Director, is now Treasurer of the Association.

### POCONO INSTITUTE

The Middle Atlantic States Council holds its summer Institute at the Pocono Crest Hotel, Pocono Pines, Pennsylvania. Miss Sally Story, former Director of Religious Education at the First Church, Chicago, was a member of the faculty of the experimental school for children. Dr. Thaddeus B. Clark, Minister at St. Louis, gave the final lecture in a series on "Basic Unitarian Convictions." His subject was "Ethics and Morals." Randall S. Hilton, Secretary of the Western Unitarian Conference, presented a daily course in organization and administration. Mr. Hilton also gave one of the Basic Conviction series talks on "Truth." The Institute was held June 27 to July 2, 1949. Rev. Dale De Witt, Executive Director of the Middle Atlantic States region, arranged the program. Mr. De Witt will be the leader of the Ministers' Seminar at the Geneva Institute, August 28 to September 4.

### GENERAL CONFERENCE

The Biennial meeting of the General Conference of the American Unitarian Association will be held at Portland, Oregon, August 15 to 18, 1949. A number of persons from the Western Unitarian Conference, including the Secretary, plan to be present. Members of the Commission on Planning and Review, and of the Business, Program, and Nominating Committees of the Association are elected at this Conference. Persons from the Western Conference nominated for election to committee posts are:

Business Committee:
C. David Connolly, Rockford, Illinois
David W. Raudenbush, St. Paul, Minnesota
Program Committee:
Rev. Arthur W. Olsen, Toledo, Ohio
Nominating Committee:
Dr. James Luther Adams, Chicago, Illinois

### EDNA L. ACHESON

Miss Edna L. Acheson, nationally known leader and authority in religious education, will become the Director of Religious Education for the First Unitarian Church of Chicago on September first. For the past seven years Miss Acheson has been the Director of Education for the Brick Presbyterian Church of Rochester, New York. She has from time to time been a member of the faculty of various training schools and of the Union Theological Seminary.

### WHERE THEY ARE

Insofar as it is known, the following ministers are spending their summer in the following places:

Lester Mondale—Ozarks
Thaddeus Clark—New York City
Leslie Pennington—New York City
E. T. Buehrer—Texas
Homer Jack—Rochester, New York
Preston Bradley—Europe
Burdette Backus—Europe
John Cyrus—Maine
Arnold Westwood—Cape Cod
Kenneth Walker—Maine
William Hammond—Colorado
Tracy Pullman—Michigan
Robert Weston—Cape Cod

Among the ministers spending the major portion of the summer in their parishes are: Schug—Lincoln, Brigham — Sioux City, Storm — Minneapolis, Gill — Alton, Lawson—Dayton, Smith—First Church, Cincinnati, Gilmartin—Ft. Wayne (announced arrival of Peter Ward on June 28), Mendelsohn—Rockford.

### GENEVA

Early registrations indicate another record-breaking year for the Lake Geneva Unitarian Summer Assembly. This largest of Unitarian gatherings, except for the May Meetings, promises to be again an exciting and valuable experience. Registration is $5.00 and should be sent to Mrs. Esther L. Heinrich, 629 So. Grove Avenue, Oak Park, Illinois.

The evening sessions at the Geneva Conference have now been determined. Monday and Tuesday evenings, Dr. Frederick M. Eliot, President of the American Unitarian Association, will speak; Wednesday night a panel of prominent Unitarians will discuss basic Unitarian problems; Thursday night, the speaker will be Dr. Raymond B. Bragg, Director of the Unitarian Service Committee; Friday, Stunt Nite; and Saturday, the program will be in charge of the young people's experimental worship class.

### PHONE NUMBER

The telephone number at College Camp, where the Geneva Conference is being held, has been changed. It is now Lake Geneva, Wisconsin, 5-5431.

### MOVIE

Occasionally Hollywood turns out a film of exceptional significance. "Home of the Brave" is such a film. If you have not seen it, do so at your earliest opportunity.

### SERVICE COMMITTEE

The first chapter of the Unitarian Service Committee to be organized under the new membership plan is the one at Abraham Lincoln Centre, Chicago. Mrs. Lou H. Haycock is the chairman. Memberships are five dollars per person. It is hoped that local chapters will be formed in each church. Securing members and raising funds from non-Unitarians are two undertakings which should be tackled enthusiastically and immediately.

### BOOKS

Orders for curriculum material for the fall term of the church school should be mailed to the Conference Office as soon as possible. This will ensure the materials being on hand when wanted.

If you do not have Blanshard's *American Freedom and Catholic Power,* order it now from the Conference Office. This book was listed on the *New York Times* "Best Seller" list on June 26. Check and see whether this book is in your local book stores and libraries. The subtle opposition to the distribution of this book would be amusing were it not so typical of the methods revealed by Blanshard in his chapter on Censorship of the Press, Screen and Radio.

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*Lake Geneva Unitarian Summer Assembly*
*College Camp, Wisconsin—August 28 - September 4*